THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE

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1917

"Speak unto this people that they go forward"

Freedom, Fellowship, Character and Service in Religion

THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE

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CONTENTS FOR SEPTEMBER, 1917

		Page
Editorial		1
Unitarian Faith and Orthodox Scepticism	*Rev. William Sullivan*	3
First Things First	*Rev. E. Burdette Backus*	5
The Case of the Pacifist Minister	*Rev. Charles R. Joy*	9
The Invisible King	*Rev. Augustus P. Reccord*	13
The Quarter-Hour Communion	*Dr. Frank Carleton Doan*	14
Program of the General Conference		17
Middle States Conference Letter		18
Western Conference News		20
Fellowship Notices		23
Resolutions for the General Conference		23
Two Worth-While Books		24
The Religious Education Institute at Meadville		24

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IT IS a happy arrangement that takes the biennial gathering of the General Conference of our Unitarian churches to Montreal, this month. Our churches in Canada and those in the United States have always been most intimate; but just now the alliance of England and America in war makes peculiarly sympathetic the feelings of the people of Canada and the States, and it will be an auspicious moment for American Unitarianism to have this rallying of its forces within e borders of the Dominion.

* * *

ONE may indeed ask the significant question: Why common interests in war should knit two neighboring peoples together as nothing else could do? Why our common interests of peace, which have been prevailing for many years, and becoming more and more obvious to thinking people on both sides of the border, should not have been as compelling? This is a pertinent question to ask, undoubtedly; for what Canada and the States have shared together in vital issues of continental good will and social progress for a splendid century of continuing concord, far outrun these temporary issues of war which now draw us together. Human nature must be accepted largely as it is, however, and the psychology of war is more dramatic than that of peace, beyond all doubt. To the degree in which the fundamental principles of the Unitarian gospel become dominant on both sides of the line separating Canada from the United States, to that degree may we hope that the permanent sympathies of peace and humanitarian good will grow amongst us to abolish those insidious phases of essential warfare which foolish trade-barriers and local jealousies and suspicions have engendered. We count it peculiarly fortunate that our Conference at Montreal will be presided over by that eminent Unitarian layman who, as President of the United States, urged for the legislation, and signed the bill proposing commercial reciprocity between Canada and this nation which, had it been achieved, we believe, would have insured an alliance of essential sympathy and mutual progress worth many times as much as the war alliance now binding us together.

* * *

WE ARE not "Pacifists," and we are not in sympathy with very much that is being said these days by men whom otherwise we respect most highly, in opposition to the attitude of our national Administration and its war responsibilities. Every thoughtful and righteous citizen of America, and of the world, for that matter, is in favor of peace, of course—eager to have the horrors of this hideous war brought to a conclusion at the earliest possible date. But it is the sort of peace that can last, that can conserve righteousness and progress for all the world, that can bring with it the surest guarantees of a true international good will, that wisest men insist on as the only sort of peace to be accepted as the outcome of this war. A vast proportion of the people of America are convinced that the programs of avowed "pacifists" are not the programs of really triumphant peace. Fundamentally, the issue is not so much between "pacifists" and "militarists" as between two schools of pacifism. We believe that the best friend of world-peace the world contains today now sits as President of the United States, and we realize with poignant sympathy the tremendous bafflements and perplexities which beset his path, and easily lose all patience with those strident gentlemen who, sharing neither his responsibilities nor his grasp on actual facts and issues involved, make themselves a part of the baffling hindrances that beset his service. At the same time we abhorrently protest against any endeavor to stifle the convictions of those who are otherwise minded in

the "pacifist" camps. So their utterances be genuinely conscientious, fair-minded and deliberate, we believe that the nation is better off with the utterance of their views than without it. Democracy fails miserably when it becomes craven before the voice of the minority. We only plead that integrity of truth-seeking and a reasonable open-mindedness toward those differing from them be always the mark of the "conscientious objector" whose sense of right puts him on the unpopular side.

* * *

IN THIS spirit we publish this month a notable paper presenting the "Pacifist's Side." We do not ourselves agree with Mr. Joy in his practical conclusion, but we do agree most heartily with the substantial spirit of his article, and believe that all Unitarians may be the better for catching the contagion of its good spirit. For ourselves, the practicalities of that good spirit lie in another direction. But in the last reckoning the victory to be achieved on the battlefields of Europe must be victory for the essential ideals which Mr. Joy advocates, or victory will be worse than defeat, alike for victors and vanquished. And this we believe is precisely the ideal of a "world safe for democracy" for which President Wilson has brought America into the lists.

* * *

WHY should clergymen be exempt from military service? The question is being pertinently asked in many places, and not a few lusty preachers have refused to take advantage of the privilege, and have volunteered for service. The only reason for such exemption would be that what ministers do at home is worth more to the nation, and contributes as substantially to the people's ultimate victory as though they were serving in the ranks. Is that so? Who shall answer the question? Suppose each home-staying parson answer it for himself. Is he exempt from service on the battlefield merely because he belongs to a coddled class, because he is counted in with women and children, as circumstantially non-competent, or is he exempt because of his peculiar efficiency for national values at his own place of service? And, is that efficiency merely traditional, or is it vitally actual? Is it a matter just of mass-vagueness of general worth, or is it a matter of just what Parson Jones or Parson Smith is doing, this year of our Lord, in his own community, to make religion score unmistakably for values of virile, forceful quality, in the manhood and womanhood of the nation? The Church at large, and the individual ministers in their own places, ought to take solemnly to heart the very searching challenge which this issue brings. We are not so much interested in the academic question as to whether or not ministers should be exempt. Our great interest is in the success of our ministers to *prove* that there are adequate reasons for keeping the churches well-manned during the days of national stress.

* * *

WE BELIEVE that national prohibition is coming, and we are glad that it is coming. We are not convinced that it is the ideal solution of the problem of intemperance. The ideal solution would be to have the manufacture and sale of liquor absolutely unimpeded, and to have the men and women of every community sufficiently the masters of themselves to be able to decide for themselves as to its use, with reason and moderation. But that ideal is an impractical, because unattainable, ideal under existing conditions; while a nearer approximation to ideal conditions by ridding society of the burden and curse of intemperance may be more quickly attained by the somewhat unideal method of legislative prohibition. We believe that society has a right to use that method whenever social progress demands it. It is a demand for sacrifice on the part of a comparative few for the welfare of the very many. The arguments against national prohibition are ultimately all to be reduced to issues of personal self-indulgence. The arguments for such prohibition are all in terms of unselfishness and social regeneration, and these are the arguments that ought to prevail.

A QUESTION inevitably rises in these days, as to what degree of justification can be found for worthy causes to take advantage of national difficulties to urge their specific ends. The nation is now at war; it faces prodigious issues of administrative efficiency—food, munitions, the enlistment of men, effectual legislation, quick mobilization of resources, and a workable degree of national harmony. Is this just the time for temperance reformers to make the furtherance of their cause "a war issue"—that food-conservation laws cannot be passed till their reforms are incorporated? Is this the time for labor unions to make their cause "a war issue"—that by tormenting strikes and reprisals a nation's need of quick production of supplies be used to force recognition of "labor's rights"? Is this the time for the advocates of women's suffrage to make their cause "a war issue"—by devising new ways of fretting and embarrassing the Executive of the nation in his hour of baffling service, by picketing nuisances and the like? Of course every worthy cause ought to conquer; and it is the business of those enlisted to its propagation to do all that they can, honorably, to make their cause conquer. Yet the instincts of every honest man and woman cry out against the method of "sabotage" in the urging of any moral cause; and the things which certain "Pro" congressmen have attempted at the capitol, and certain labor unions have attempted in New York and in the West, and certain women have attempted at the White House, belong precisely to the "sabotage" class. Of course in practical effect the action of the women at Washington is not very mischievous, it is simply silly. If it has any result it is to hinder the cause of Equal Franchise; making many who would be friends become utterly disgusted. But fortunately the cause is too good and too far along the way of success to be hurt seriously at this time even by such folly. But the ethics of "sabotage" are abhorrent to the spirit of essential democracy and all progressive religion. We would be sorry to have good causes won by such bad means.

UNITARIAN FAITH AND ORTHODOX SCEPTICISM.

By Rev. William L. Sullivan.

To a great many this title would appear singular and paradoxical. Unitarian faith! Orthodox scepticism! Why, the legend says that it is Unitarians who have no faith, or so little that it requires the lens of charity to discover it. And as for the scepticism, is it not written in the orthodox law that scepticism is a sin, and one of the worst of sins? How justify so startling a heading, so strange a reversal of common rumor and report?

Yet in a genuine and profound sense this heading is true; and it has been placed at the top of this page not for any sensational purpose, nor as a challenge to sterile controversy, but because it illustrates a deep spiritual truth which is growing more and more urgently necessary for this age to learn.

Scepticism is seated at the very heart of dogmatic Christianity, for the reason that in this system of belief, faith is placed primarily in documents and institutions rather than in human nature and the intuitions and intimations of the soul. "If you doubt a text or dispute a book of the Bible, you are in danger of losing God. You must crush the questionings of the mind lest you fall away from the church and go to the fearful abode of the impious. If you give up doctrinal Christianity, you are but one step from atheism—Hell yawns beneath the man or woman who dissents from the Book. Biblical criticism is accursed because it applies the canons of literary analysis and historical research to the Scriptures. Evolution, both organic and inorganic, is atheistic in tendency because it casts discredit on the biblical account of the origins of the world."

These statements, all of which have been used and many of which are still used, partake of the very nature of disbelief. What do they declare but this: If you give your reason and moral sense full and free play, you will lose your faith in God and the other central truths of religion. They all imply that faith is fragile and its evidence apt to wither; that God has left in nature

and history so faint a trace of Himself that we shall miss Him if we range the broad plains of being, and shall find Him only by one narrow path through Palestine, one interpretation of one set of documents, one ecclesiastical corporation, one sprinkling, one hierarchy.

Is it not clear that this is disbelief? When we are thus warned against wandering outside a fixed theological territory because God is only inside its boundaries, while outside in all the rest of the universe is darkness or the prince of darkness, is it not manifest that it is not a radiant, joyous, confident faith that speaks, but a timorous and suspicious unfaith? When God is shut up in documents or revealed only to those who look through the spyglass of a creed, how sorrowfully is He banished from His world, and to what narrow measure is the soul's native faith in Him reduced!

Faith wants stronger wings and wider spaces than this. Faith that is aglow with the morning light says to us: "Study everything to the utmost, in nature, in history, and in the soul of man! Every step you take in physical science will reveal to you more mighty mysteries of inexhaustible Power. Every insight that you gain into the spirit within the human breast will cast a clearer ray upon the infinite Truth that is the Ideal of the intellect; upon ineffable Right that is the ideal of the conscience; upon the unimaginable Love that is the Ideal of the heart. If in exploring the universe you remember that in it are not only physical magnitudes but moral splendors, and that these also must be explained, accounted for, and referred to an adequate and kindred end, your eyes will be opened and you will see the whole divine creation glorious with the light of God. You may, if the evidence so disposes you, deny one text or twenty; but God is not covered up in the texts. You will still see Him in the world without, and hear Him in the world within. Doubt whatever theologies your reason bids you to doubt. Leave whatever churches your conscience commands you to leave. God is not a prisoner of their conjectures—He is even the light by which your faculty for truth makes its conscientious denials. And He will bestow a fuller light enabling you to utter a grander affirmation. Within and without you may find Him; and though every book were lost and all the pontiffs and doctors of the law dead and buried and forgotten, still would your mind discover Him, your conscience obey Him, your heart aspire to Him."

This latter faith alone we think deserves the name. It does not, be it noted, scorn a faith in Bibles, churches, or sacraments, but is eager to enlarge and fortify it, and make it worthier of both God and man. It does not object because people find God in Palestine, but because they find Him nowhere else. It does not complain because believers linger over one splendid chapter in the history of God's dealings with men, but because they fancy that the glorious story is begun and ended there, and that all the rest of the volume says nothing of its Author. It does not disagree with those who say: "God once was wonderful to patriarchs and prophets;" but it would add: "God *is* wonderful, for in your heart and mine He has fixed a Mount of Transfiguration, in your conscience and mine a Sinai of His holy law."

This freer, wider, and surer faith which Unitarians who have kept to their authentic spirit possess, does not contain that implicit scepticism which, we have said, is inseparable from a faith whose chief foundation is a document, and, indeed, only one permissible interpretation of that document. Rather is it the most confident faith possible, the most happy, the most free from fear. It urges every study to the fullest possible development, knowing that at the end the perfect Truth will be seen embracing all derived truths, and the human spirit as indissolubly linked with one that is Divine.—[From *Faith and Freedom.*

Those who have great gifts and graces, and offer them generously for sacred uses, are honored and blessed, if what they do is done with sweet sincerity. But it is those who have but a small gift, and give that at a cost the gifted cannot measure, whom the eyes of Christ rest upon with the tenderest light, and of whom He says, "These give more than ye all."—[Robert Collier.

First Things First

By Rev. E. Burdette Backus

Minister of the Unitarian Church of Erie, Pa.

THERE are three principle threads given with which to work out the pattern of religion. The first of these is *Science.* Many men insist on separating the two; they say that Science and religion are things entirely apart, dealing with unrelated aspects of man's life. This complete divorce of Science and religion is not to be sanctioned for a moment. Man's life is essentially a unit, and to attempt to hold science and religion apart does violence to that unity and inevitably results in loss to both science and religion. Where the two are seen to be mutually helpful and admirably adapted to work together, the fruits are wholly good. Religion is purified and science is made warmer and more human when the two proceed hand in hand.

The first great service which science renders religion is in helping it to revise its method. Religion has in the past assumed certain things to be so, and then proceeded to shape its demands in accord with these assumptions. The great word has been *faith;* though you can't understand this thing, it is so, and it is better for you simply to let it go at that and ask no questions. God is!—the perfect, all wise, all loving, all powerful creator of the world; this is the doctrine you are to accept; you are not to inquire how religion knows that it is so, simply take it on faith. Jesus Christ was the son of God, born of the Virgin Mary, died on the cross to save you, *believe* this though you can't understand it, and all shall be well with you. Refuse to believe it, and you suffer dire consequences. Science has proceeded by an entirely different method. It has sought first the facts, and then formulated its theories in accord with the teaching of those facts. It observed that apples fall to the ground, and then formulated the law of gravitation; it studied the results of selective cultivation of peas, and arrived at the Mendelian laws of heredity. "The man of science has learned to believe in justification, not by faith, but by verification" (Huxley), by learning whether or not the principle is in accord with the known facts.

Men of religion are learning that they can apply this same method in their field with great benefit; the tenets of religion are being required to justify themselves by the facts of life. The consequence of this is, on the one hand, to rid religion of a mass of superstitions that do more harm than good, and on the other hand to confirm and make more certain the things which remain. So long as we hold that the Bible is the verbally inspired word of God, the structure of our faith is in danger of being overturned by the inevitable conflict between that theory and the facts of our own experience; but when we have proceeded by the method of Science, and have seen the Bible for what it really is—the faulty human record of the religious evolution of the Hebrews—nothing can rob it of the place which it holds in our lives. Likewise, with the other teachings of religion, though they may suffer some alteration from submitting themselves to the tests which science proposes, the net result is that those which are essential remain and are made yet more secure.

But there is a limit to the method of Science, and in the last resort even its findings rest on faith; faith in the accuracy of the observations and in the soundness of the deductions from those observations; faith in the integrity of the universe. So in religion, faith must continue to be the foundation upon which we rear our structure. But it is no longer a blind, unthinking faith; rather it is the faith that ever renews itself by verification from the facts of life. Like the giant son of mother-earth in the fable of old, if it is lifted up so that it is no longer in contact with the world it loses its strength and may be killed, but if it keeps its touch with the world it renews its strength and grows stronger at every step which it takes.

Practical results of the greatest importance follow this modification of the method of religion in accord with that of science. In the first place, it gives us a new sense of the value of truth, of the accurate representation of the facts of life. We appreciate more than ever before the words of Jesus—"know the truth and the truth shall make you free." We have learned that one of the supreme loyalties of religion is the loyalty to truth; we have learned that religion's purpose of adding to the values of life is best served as we maintain a scrupulous integrity of mind, and that it is wiser and safer to face the facts of life as they are than to attempt to conceal them behind a veil of false imaginings. We agree heartily with Schopenhaur when he says, "the truth is the only safe thing, it is the only solid consolation, it is the indestructible diamond."

The second result of the adoption by religion of the method of Science is the relating of the ideal more closely to the real. In the past religion has been otherworldly. It has given free rein to man's innate idealism, and has relegated the achievement of the ideal to some other life. The introduction of the scientific spirit has made us realize that we live in the here and now, and that the task of religion is to help the world of today to become tomorrow the world of our dreams and aspirations. Scientific religion is no less idealistic than the religion of old, but it is more deeply concerned with finding the ways and means of making the ideal the real.

The hold of the past, however, is strong upon us, and the tendency of religion to deal in ideals that are severed from the realities of life insists upon manifesting itself. The Free Religious Association of America, an organization of the liberals of various denominations, lists International Peace as one of the supreme religious issues of this age. All of us, I am sure, are convinced that they are right in doing so. Yet some of the forms which this ideal assumes in the expressions of today are as remote from the actual facts of the situation as was the old-fashioned conception of heaven from the life of this earth. The extreme pacifist position ignores the facts of our human life; it is not scientific; it is idealism that lacks the saving element of contact with the real. The scientific spirit demands that in dealing with this and kindred problems we shall not only conceive the ideal clearly, but that we shall take into consideration present conditions as they relate to this ideal, and then seek to learn how to bridge the gap between the two. The chasm is far too wide for us to take it in a single leap, and the task of spanning it is one of gigantic proportions. Religion's work is not simply to tell us of the beauty of the land that lies on the other side, but to help us build the bridge as well, so that we shall not leap out to our destruction, but may proceed in safety to the promised land.

In addition to the advantages which come to religion through the adoption of the method of Science, a direct gift of material comes to religion from the scientist's work in laboratory and field. At the heart of religion lies the feeling of reverence, that feeling which we have when we are held enraptured by the beauties of a flaming sunset, or a simple flower; the wonder that creeps over the heart when we walk by night under the stars and are brought to a sudden realization of the mystery and majesty of the world in which we live; the exaltation which we feel when we think on the life of some heroic man or woman. This natural reverence is by no means crushed by true Science, for the more deeply we penetrate the secrets of the universe the more marvelous do we find it to be. The astronomer's telescope has opened a world more vast than even our imagination was capable of conceiving; the microscope has revealed delicacies of beauty and organization of which we could never have dreamed. Our wonder and our reverence must grow with the advance of our knowledge; the spirit of religion deepens as science guides us farther in the study of life. Truly Science is a thread indispensable to the working out of the pattern on which we are toiling in its texture there is at once the strength and the beauty which are essential to our purpose. A religion cannot meet the needs of souls that have been touched by the spirit

of Science, unless it partakes itself of the spirit of Science.

The second of the threads which I have sought to employ is Democracy. Under this term the modern man seeks to bring together those ideals of human relationships which have in the past been conceived of as belonging to the Kingdom of God that was to be established in some mysterious and supernatural fashion. We have reached the conclusion that God's method of securing the ideal social order is that of the slow process of evolution, bringing the new out of the old, using only those natural means which reside in human lives. The basis of our faith in the eventual achievement of the ideal state is a deep and abiding trust that the natural man, despite all of his defects and weaknesses, is fundamentally good, and that he is in the process of becoming better; there is in him the material out of which can be reared the social order of our dreams. Our task is to develop and use that material.

Here, again, the task of making the transition from the ideal to its realization is more difficult than that of simply picturing the ideal. We are agreed that Democracy means "equality of opportunity for all," the chance for every person to make the most of the talents with which he is endowed. But we are hopelessly at variance in our convictions as to the way in which this is to be attained. One insists that it can come only through a rigid social program, another is equally sure that complete freedom for the individual is essential; between these two extremes there is an infinite variety of opinions. It is well for us to have our convictions and to give utterance to them, but it behooves us also to be exceedingly humble in facing this great problem. Its issues are so vast and complicated, its phases so numberless that no human mind can possibly grasp the thing in its entirety. The best we can do is to put forth our theory, work for it heartily, but realize at the same time that the theory of another who disagrees violently with us may, after all, supplement our own and contribute quite as much to the solution of the problem as does ours.

Though we differ greatly in our economic and social programs, we are generally agreed that the stability of the ideal Democracy for which we are striving will depend upon the attitude of man in relation to his fellow man; ultimately, it is a problem of ethics. So the introduction of the thread of Democracy into the pattern of religion means that ethics shall have a conspicuous place; indeed that it shall be woven into every part of the whole. Someone has said that "morality no longer depends upon the religious sanction, it is religion that depends on the moral sanction;" unless religion is permeated throughout with morality, unless it bears fruit in right human conduct, it is worthless. This is quite in accord with the demands of the democratic ideal which makes as its first requirement upon all of its citizens a spirit of goodwill towards all other citizens. Goodwill is the basis of morality; if we are possessed of a good will towards other men, we inevitably refrain from what we know will do them harm; we are impelled to do that which we know will be to their best interests. The religion of Democracy cannot fail, if it is true to its appointed task, to be at one with the religion of Jesus in giving the first place to ethical commands.

In speaking of the contribution which Science makes to religion, I said that the feeling of reverence lies at the heart of religion. The third thread that is given me for use in the weaving of the pattern of religion, a thread which binds the other two together and tinges both of them with its own warm colors, is Reverence.

In Goethe's Wilhelm Meister there is a splendid passage in which a most unusual school is described—the school of the poet's ideal. Wilhelm Meister has come to put his son into the school. When they enter the grounds, they see the boys in the fields, some of them looking steadfastly into the sky, others gazing at the ground, and others going about looking into one another's faces. Naturally, the father who is to place his son in this school is curious to know the meaning of the actions of the boys, and he asks the guide to tell him what they are doing. The guide replies by asking Wilhelm Meister if he can put into one word the

most essential quality of human life. After some thought, Wilhelm replies that veneration or *Reverence* is that quality. The guide agrees with him, and tells him that the school seeks to develop in the boys this quality in which most people are sadly lacking.

Those who were looking up into the sky were learning veneration for the things which are above them; Reverence for the majestic order and power of the Universe, for that which is usually described by the word God. There was nothing of fear in their attitude, simply a humility, a deep wonder and awe, a Reverence. Those who were gazing at the ground were learning Reverence for the things beneath them, for the order of nature. Those who simply went about looking their companions in the face were learning that Reverence which the guide tells Wilhelm is the highest of all, Reverence for the souls of their fellows and of themselves.

Surely Goethe is right in the emphasis which he places on this quality. The attitude of most of us towards life is a careless one, sometimes even flippant, and the values of life can never be revealed to us so long as we persist in this attitude. That feeling of awe which creeps over us on those special occasions when we are made aware of the grandeur of nature ought to abide with us always, not in its intensity, perhaps, but certainly in its essence. You may remember the story of the scientist in Scotland who was at work in the field one day when he was approached by a herdboy, who asked to look through the microscope. It chanced that the scientist was studying a piece of common heather. The boy looked at it long, and when he raised his head there was an expression of mingled awe and pain on his face. At last he said: "And to think of how many times I have crushed it under my heel not knowing, not knowing!" Looking through the microscope had brought a religious experience to that boy. Reverence had possessed his soul, and we may be sure that its effect was permanent; always after that the common heather would be something much more holy to the boy than it had ever been before; his life had gained in richness.

We become finer men and women when all the aspects of life take on that sacredness which they assume in the moments of insight when we bow our heads in the humility of Reverence. So into the texture of our religion there must be woven a deep and sincere Reverence for whatever is true and good and pure in the world. Science has broadened our horizon, Democracy has given us a sense of kinship with people the world over. The spirit of Reverence must be extended to cover the length and breadth of this great field. Wherever truth has found expression, be it in pagan or Christian land, it is worthy of our Reverence; wherever splendid lives have been lived, our veneration must go out to them regardless of race or creed. But in our eagerness to include all that is worthy, even in remote parts of time and space, we must not fall into the error of ignoring that which is right about us. Too many times we are like the herd-boy, we scorn and crush under foot the beauties that are nearest and most common of all, because we have not looked closely enough at them.

How many times do the people round about us suffer because they look common and ordinary to our eyes and we never take the trouble to know them as they are. How many times we are repelled by what we consider the crudities of the faith which someone else holds only to discover when we examine that faith as it works in the life of its professor that it is after all a thing of great beauty. How much our own lives suffer because we have not a proper Reverence for our own souls. Beauties far surpassing the glories of the sunset or the flaming rose bush have their dwelling place in the lives of all of us—in our minds, our aspirations, our affections and our loves. These things will take on a new glory, a radiance divine as we think on them with Reverence in our hearts. Oh, that we might know them for what they are, true revelations of the living God, manifestations of that great spirit of righteousness and wisdom and love which is toiling endlessly to claim the world for its own! Then indeed would they command our Reverence and all the thoughts and

yearnings and deeds of our lives would become acts of religion pure and undefiled; we should walk ever in the presence of God.

Here, then, are the three threads with which I am seeking to weave the pattern of my religion—Science, Democracy, Reverence. I have spoken in personal terms because I am aware that each one of us must weave his own pattern if his religion is to be vital to him. But I am convinced, at the same time, that I have indicated the material which all of us must employ; each one will use his material differently but we must all draw upon the same precious supply of fabric.

Since I am convinced that the Unitarian Church should stand for that which is best in religion, regardless of whether or not that best can command the attention of the mass of the people, I very naturally desire to see it championing the cause of Scientific religion, accepting eagerly the tried and tested offerings which Science has to lay on its altars; enlisting all of its resources in the development and widespread application of the spirit of Democracy; teaching men and women and little children the holiness of life, filling their hearts with Reverence for that which is above, beneath, around and within themselves. If we bear steadfast witness to such a religion, making it manifest in our own lives we shall contribute something to the growing life of man for which humanity shall have reason to be eternally grateful, we shall have shown ourselves true children of God.

The Case of the Pacifist Minister

By Charles R. Joy

An address delivered before the Unitarian Fellowship for Social Justice, May 24, 1917.

The doctrine of infallibility is evidently not yet dead, even in the thought of otherwise liberal minded people. The infallibility of Church and Pope we long ago rejected, the inerrancy of the Bible more recently we cast aside, but today we are confronted with another expression of the old idea, from which we have not yet freed ourselves. The new theory of infallibility is expressed in terms of nationality. We have come to agree, most of us, that when a nation declares war upon another nation her judgment must be considered by those within her borders as unerring. There must be no criticism, private judgment must fall in line with official action. And so this new spectre of infallibility is suddenly conjured up before us, the infallibility of the nation when it declares war. According to this theory, the principles and ideals of the government must become our principles and ideals, and we must render the unquestioning obedience of the soldier. The subservient peasants of France inquired of Louis XI, "Sire, what are our opinions?" And so today we are told that we must go to Washington in order to ascertain just what our opinions are in this great and terrible crisis of American civilization.

The pacifist is one who finds himself temperamentally unable to take this position. He finds that his own conscience exerts over him a compelling power. He is perfectly well aware that his conscience may not be in agreement with the ultimate ideals of truth, but he does not see in this fact any reason for disloyalty to its present dictates. He must judge for himself whether his country is right or wrong, and in accordance with his feeling he must speak and act. He cannot take his opinion from another, he must be faithful to the voice of the spirit within him. And for his faithfulness to his own conscience, he is ready to pay whatever price may be required. That today he happens to be opposed to the settled policy of his country makes his position a difficult one, but the difficulty that he faces does not alter his duty. He is more anxious to see his country right in principle than successful in war, and so he finds himself compelled to oppose her when in some dire emergency she takes what seems to him the wrong course. He recognizes the conscien-

tiousness and high idealism of many who differ from him, he tries to give expression to his feeling with good will and forbearance, but he cannot stand silently by while he thinks he sees his brethren taking the road that leadeth to destruction, however much he may admire their noble purposes and their heroic self-sacrifice. It is his duty to speak, and to speak in no uncertain terms.

That he belongs to an insignificant minority does not prove him wrong. The history of human progress, as Emerson says, is initially the history of minorities and usually of minorities of one. The pacifist is hopeful that the minority to which he belongs may prove to be the minority that makes the history of human progress, and he is willing to sacrifice the pleasure of membership in the great majority for the sake of the privilege of serving the future through such a maligned and misunderstood minority. He has no fear that what he may say or do will undermine the sacred heritage which has come down to us from the past, for he knows that all that is precious there will be well guarded by many consecrated souls. He is striking out a path by the power of his faith through an unknown wilderness in the hope that he may find a promised land of peace and joy and fulfilment. His effort may be vain. He may fall in the venture of faith. His faith itself may be ill-grounded. Perchance there is no promised land in that direction. But the God within him is stirring, and he must press on or be faithless.

The pacifist is in the position of an inventor who believes that he has found a better way to accomplish a desirable end than that sanctioned by long usage. The adoption of his invention is, however, attended with a certain amount of risk, and the forces of tradition and inertia are strongly opposed to him. His invention has worked on a small scale, but he has had no opportunity to try it on a large scale, and therefore he cannot demonstrate his theory. He is confident, however, that on any scale it would work well, and so he is insisting with all the power of which he is capable that the new invention be tried. He is scorned and ridiculed, he is detested and abused, but he cannot in loyalty to the truth give up the fight. He intends to persist until at last his contention is recognized or disproven.

In relation to the immediate issue, the pacifist thinks he has caught a vision of a better way than that of war to accomplish the ends for which we fight. He believes that the safety of his loved country can best be insured by the adoption of this better way. He sees the nation following in the wake of historic empires that have passed on to their death, and his heart is sick with fear and foreboding. He is convinced that if we only had sufficient faith, sufficient courage, to risk our present happiness in the trial of this new way the future would see attained the endless yearning of our lives for peace, and justice, and righteousness. And because of this faith, and because of his loyalty to his country's welfare, he is willing to bear the stigma of disgrace if through his stripes the nation may be healed. There is no question in his mind as to his present duty. He cannot be silent, he must utilize every opportunity to awaken his countrymen to that which seems to him the only way to meet the forces of evil and change them to forces of good. Others may call him an obstructionist, a visionary, a fanatic, but the love of country and mankind makes his course a clear one.

The heroism of those who are going forth in every nation today to slay and to be slain must not be underrated. It is a magnificent tribute to the capacity of the human heart to rise above all selfish interests for the sake of a great ideal. The pacifist well knows what all this means. He is well aware of the purity of this patriotic passion as it manifests itself in many of our noblest men today. His own feet keep time even against his will to the martial music, his heart is warmed within him by the consecration and determination of the marching men, but he feels that this fine spirit is being misdirected, and his soul is appalled by the horror and waste of war. It is not what wealth and property are destroyed, it is not even that life is sacrificed.

Surely it is man's supreme glory to dedicate his wealth and his life for the service of God. That which appalls the pacifist is the fact that all the splendid heroism laid so willingly upon the altar of the insatiable god of war might have been dedicated to the same high ends in such a better and more effective way. And when the greatest leader of American thought tells him that a strong alliance of America and France and England can be cemented only with blood, which means the blood of German boys, it seems to him that we have lost our grip on God, and have slipped back for centuries.

The pacifist does not call upon men to throw away their nobler impulses. He does not urge them to seek for ease. He summons them to action. He exhorts them to the same heroism, the same self-sacrifice, but he shows them this better way. Said Emerson: "If peace is sought to be defended or preserved for the safety of the luxurious and the timid, it is a sham, and the peace will be base. War is better, and the peace will be broken. If peace is to be maintained it must be by brave men, who have come up to the same height as the hero, namely, the will to carry their life in their hand, and stake it at any instant for their principle, but who have gone one step beyond the hero, and will not seek another man's life." This is the spirit of the true pacifist, and when we have learned to call forth and utilize these nobler instincts of the race in the service and uplift of mankind, then that which has given war its glamor and its appeal will have been diverted to the ways of truth and life. At the present moment the world is trying to lift a great weight by the application of all its strength. The pacifist commends its spirit and its purpose, but suggests that this strength be more efficiently employed. If we are lifting with a lever, it makes a tremendous difference where the lifting force is applied in relation to the fulcrum. Perhaps by a different direction of our strength we might waste less energy and lift a greater weight.

It is an important part of the strategy of war to select a favorable site for battle and then to force the conflict there. The pacifist suggests that the same method be followed in the present conflict between right and wrong. He protests against the folly of waging war upon the ground which the enemy has selected and with the weapons that the enemy has chosen. He urges that we select the field of battle in such a way that the advantage of the strife will be with us, and also that we select the weapons to be used so that our skill will count for most. We must lift the conflict to the plane of spiritual forces, in order that the strength of righteousness may be felt. On the plane of violence the most unscrupulous has an insuperable advantage. There it is that brute strength weighs most. The man has no chance in conflict with the tiger so long as he confines himself to the use of that physical strength which is the tiger's only weapon. He gains the advantage when he employs the power of his brain against the tiger's muscular strength. And so in conflict between men who employ both strength of body and mind, he who is lower down on the scale of life will possess the great advantage. He will have more strength of body, he will employ his mental powers with more brutal effectiveness. Therefore it is that for successful combat with such an adversary, a man must lift the conflict to a higher plane, namely, the plane of spiritual force. Then the tide of battle turns again, and the advantage rests with him whose life is nearest the Christ-life, the God-life. He finds at his hand weapons of warfare of which his adversary has never dreamed. He wields forces which become in his hand omnipotent. He who is unable to stoop to atrocities and unwilling to wage a war of terrorism finds for himself weapons of spiritual might which more than compensate for the loss of these lower and more carnal weapons. If we are to bring the whole force of our civilization to bear upon the conflict of nations, then we must carefully select the theatre of war, in order that the force of barbarism may not have an invincible advantage. We must oppose the higher weapons to the lower, the modern machinery of spiritual warfare to the antiquated engines

of destruction. This, then, is the plea of the pacifist, that we elevate the plane of conflict to the place where superior refinement and culture can be brought into play, that we refuse to meet the enemy upon his terrain, that we decline to fight with weapons he has selected.

So the pacifist suggests that we quickly terminate the disastrous conflict by calling out all our reserves at once. He is confident that if we employ immediately certain powers which now lie latent waiting until the war is over for their exercise that the victory will soon be ours. He has learned through his experience that the forces we hold in reserve can not long be resisted, if we possess the daring and the faith to use them. These reserve forces are the forces of religion, which seem to remain in abeyance while war is in progress: justice, righteousness, kindness, mercy, good will, generosity, forgiveness, sympathy, understanding, love. We little realize how mighty are these reserves, and we never will realize their power until we call them out and place them in the first-line trenches. Against them bayonets are futile, bullets are harmless, shells are useless. The fiercest charges surge against their ranks in vain, the deadliest gases roll over them and leave them unchanged. No power on earth can check their ultimate triumph, for they are from heaven, and filled with the spirit of victory. The pacifist believes in his religion, believes in it so strongly that he is ready to give it a fair trial. He is willing to risk all he possesses in the effort to demonstrate that the evil can most effectively be overcome by good. His trust is in God, and in the strength of the armor which he takes from the arsenal of heaven he fears no foe, for naught can harm him. We seem for the moment to have lost our faith in the spiritual defenses of a nation, we seem to have lost our trust in the Infinite, and have come to believe that if our guns fail us, then our doom is sealed. What of God today? Has he forgotten his children? Or can it be that we have forgotten Him? I cannot believe that any nation that puts its trust in justice and righteousness and love and God will be forsaken. No enemy can conquer her, there is no breach within her walls.

After all we cannot end this war by crushing Germany. We cannot end it even by defeating her. The war will end only when she is won as a friend. We cannot lift the level of her life by killing her men and bereaving her women and starving her children. If she is at present a menace to civilization she will not cease to be a menace when the allies have imposed upon her their terms of peace. So long as her spirit is unchanged she will wait her time and once again we shall be compelled to face the same problem of hatred and misunderstanding. The world must win her friendship through good will, it must change her spirit through love. When we have won the affection of the German people, then the problem will be solved, until that time our efforts are worse than wasted.

Believing, therefore, that the power of our neglected religion is the one great force that works for permanent peace, the duty of the pacifist minister is clear. He must preach with an insistence which he has never before felt necessary the old truths of brotherhood and good will. He must keep his faith in man without exception, he must teach the fatherhood of God without reservation. He must apply the precepts of Jesus to nations as well as individuals, teaching that self-sacrifice and not self-defense is the supreme ideal of Christian service, and that Jesus' summary of law and gospels is a sufficient code for international diplomacy today. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy strength. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. We have not questioned the sublimity of that teaching. Shall we then limit its application to the individual, after the manner of General Bernhardi, or shall we recognize once and for all that Jesus meant "thou shalt love thy sister nation as thine own?" "America first?" Ah, there is a nobler attitude than that, which Christianity has long suggested. If America must be first, let it be first in service, first in self-sacrifice, but always last in self-love. I wish I might join with so many of those I

respect in seeing the promise of universal peace in the present situation. But I have no such hope, unless the horror and the utter futility of war are brought home to us all in such a way that neither conqueror or conquered will be willing to resort again to its dire extreme. We used to say "Woe to the vanquished!" Today we say with equal truth "Woe to the victor!" The Germans have a proverb that a great war leaves a country with three armies —an army of cripples, an army of mourners, and an army of thieves. Upon such a foundation we can hardly build the temple of universal peace. Peace will come when religion has become a vital, burning thing, when God has become for us greater than the old tribal god, when faith in man has become for us a larger thing than faith in our countrymen, when trust in spiritual forces has become a thing more sublime than that weak trust which thrives only under sunny skies. God alone can save the day for us, and sooner or later we must turn to him.

The pacifist minister, then, if he be true to the faith that is in him must lift his eyes unto the hills of God and get the vision stamped upon his soul, the vision of the eternal forces working through the hearts of men to bring the long-desired era of love and peace and infinite good will. And with that vision in his soul he must turn to the needy world with the fervent hope that others may see what he has seen, that they may be inspired with the great ideals of spiritual self-sacrifice, and consecrate themselves to the service of the cross. Fearlessly he must lead the way, if he be worthy, and prove in his own life that God is with him, that invisible legions of angels are round about him as he faces the earthly weapons of hate with the heavenly weapons of love. It is his firm conviction that with him and with those who like him have caught the vision rests the future. Rightly or wrongly, he believes that they constitute today the small minority which is making the history of human progress. There are two irresistible and infinite facts, said Victor Hugo, the fraternity of men and the power of God. Through the recognition of these two facts the maker of peace is today forging his way to victory.

The Invisible King

By Rev. Augustus P. Reccord
Church of the Unity, Springfield, Mass.

In "Mr. Britling Sees It Through," Mr. H. G. Wells speaks of God as "the only King," fighting through men against error and evil. "The Invisible King" is a development of this theme. It was evidently prepared in haste to meet a supposed popular demand, and yet affords evidence that the author has stumbled upon a great truth. To this apparent haste must be attributed certain obvious defects. First of all, the book is flippant and superficial in its criticism of the old theology. Without admitting that its strictures upon the anomalies of the Nicene council and the irrationalities of the Nicene creed are too severe, we have a right to expect a certain dignity in handling such themes, even by Mr. Wells. And again, the book is inexcusably narrow in its conception of Christianity. Starting with the assumption that only those who accept the Nicene creed can be called Christians, it is easy for the author to conclude that he himself is not a Christian and that the coming religion has nothing in common with Christianity.

In developing his main theme, Mr. Wells makes an impossible distinction between the Creator, or God in Nature, and the Redeemer, or God in the human soul, affirming that he is agnostic as to the first but a believer in the second. He fails to realize that these are two different phases of one everlasting reality. Another surprising assumption is that God is necessarily finite and incomplete. Otherwise he could not be a person, for personality involves limitation. Mr. Wells seems to be unacquainted with the philosophical conception of personality as something known to us only in its finite human form, and existing unlimited and complete only in God. It is the absence of finitude

and limitation which makes him God.

The real worth of the book does not lie in any fresh contribution to the field of theological inquiry, but in the frankness with which it bases all religion upon personal experience. If one does not know God in his own soul, he cannot know him at all. If one has once been made conscious of his presence and his power, he can never again doubt his existence. And so Mr. Wells defines religion as the synthesis of the diverging and conflicting motives of life and the identification of that life with the purpose of God. This purpose is the establishment of the kingdom of God here among men. To this end we are summoned by God—the invisible King—to cooperate with him in the effort to make this kingdom a present day reality.

The one great defect in this conception of God is that it is limited to humanity. It has nothing in common with the power which is everywhere present and everywhere operative in the world without. To Mr. Wells, the church, with its sacraments, is nothing. He characterizes it as the disease of Christianity. And yet what he fails to see in the world without, he beholds in the world within. What he fails to find in the church, he finds in the inner sanctuary of his own soul. Blind to the testimony of observation, he surrenders unconditionally to the testimony of experience. Thus he is essentially a mystic. All that differentiates his mysticism from that of the past is its militant character. "The Invisible King" is essentially a fighter, fighting in and through the life of the race and destined to win the ultimate victory.

All that is needed to complete this message is the recognition that this militant power has been in the world from the beginning and is everywhere present in the world today. His glory is resplendent in the heavens above and his law is dominant in the soul within. Donald Hankey, in a little book entitled, "A Student in Arms," speaks of the sense of incongruity aroused by the spectacle of flowers in Flanders in the immediate vicinity of the trenches. He could find nothing in common between the joyous life of nature in its Spring, and the wicked strife of men, until he realized that the scarlet poppy, enriching nature's beauty, and the humble soldier, dying for an ideal, are both alike instruments of God's will. "The glory of the flower is one; and the glory of the man is another; but both alike belong to the one Father and creator of all." This is a lesson which Mr. Wells needs to learn and which we cannot afford to forget.

The Quarter-Hour Communion

(*Un quart d'heure pour Dieu*)

Conducted by DR. FRANK CARLETON DOAN, author of *Religion and the Modern Mind*

The Asymptote.

I.

In mathematics they have a figure called the asymptotic curve. It is the nature of this curve to approach steadily nearer and nearer a given line called the asymptote, but without ever reaching it. The curve represents any mathematical series whose function it is to approach by constant steps a limit which, in the nature of the case, it can never reach. Take, for example, $1+\frac{1}{2}+\frac{1}{4}$ . . . . . and so on. Here you have such a series: It is constantly approaching the limit 2, but, though it go on forever, it can never quite amount to 2.

II.

The other day I was thinking of the asymptote, and it struck me as a perfect symbol of life as we all know it. Life is an aspiration, a struggle toward the unattainable, the impossible. If some gifted mathematician were to plot the life-curve of any one of us, it would show life with all its ups and downs mounting steadily toward a goal forever just beyond its reach.

Life—it is like the flight of Shelley's skylark. It rises from the field where it has been feeding, in a burst of song mounts toward the sky, mounts higher and higher, and at last disappears from

human sight. Disappears—and yet you know that, though it be endowed with immortal strength and hope, it can never quite sing its way to the end of the sky.

Just so it is with Life. It goes forth in a great burst of joy, mounts upward through the years, drawn heavenward by an instinct as sure as that which lifts up the winged lark. But Life never quite comes to the end of its flight; its purposes are never quite fulfilled. We can never quite sing ourselves into a state of perfect, lasting joy. Each day, as twilight draws on and we prepare to go to our rest, it is with a divine discontent. If only we could have mounted a little higher this day, been a little stronger, a little braver, come a little nearer the destination fixed by our heart's desire! Here lies at once the tragedy and the glory of human life—to fall short today only to arise and follow a swifter and straighter course on the morrow.

III.

The tragedy of it—to know in advance that you can never reach the full measure of your hopes; that, no matter how far your flight, the heights above will be still calling you on and up; that, though you fight never so valiantly, you can never win a final victory—there is tragedy here. A great singer never quite sings the song that is in his soul. The public speaker never quite pours forth the world-delivering truth that is in his mind. The heart of the great philanthropist, even in the hour of his most lavish giving, is heavy over the wretchedness he knows is forever beyond the reach of his open hand. The great reformer has a program for the abolition of all evil from the face of the earth, works day and night that it may be adopted by men, and yet he knows—no one better than he—that, even after his revolutionary program has been adopted by all the peoples of the earth, there will still be dark corners of the earth not yet flooded with the light of his spirit.

And, as if this were not tragic enough, the human soul is built on such lines that, the more eager its aspirations, the deeper is its sense of incompetence. The greater the soul of the singer, the philanthropist, the agitator, the greater agony his in his night of failure. The thing he aims at is infinite in its reaches, but his wings how clipped, his strength how limited, his hours how short!

Men like Schopenhauer have written whole systems of philosophy around this central tragedy of life. We pride ourselves upon being a little higher than the beasts of the field. We do, do we? The more fools, we—they say. We are self-conscious, have all manner of hopes, aspirations, longings of which the poorly endowed animals are but faintly, if at all, conscious. We have, have we? The more fools, we—they say. We plan our lives big, build toward the future, reason together, and together organize our humanity around great ideals. Fools! We fools!

The greater fools, we. Our very nobility is our undoing. Unlike the placid, contented beasts of the field, we must hunger and thirst after the unattainable, the impossible. Once we have heard the call of the divine, there is no more rest for us. Each morrow must see us swifter and straighter in our course. It is an eternal quest. Each day we go seeking holier and holier grails. But never do we find the one Holy Grail which is alone worth the seeking. Our boasted superiority to the beasts does make asymptotes of us all—we set before us an eternal limit which our lives can never, never quite reach. Asymptotes, fools, we!

What's the use, these apostles of pessimism want to know. What's the use of a divine appetite if you can never eat or drink enough from the Eternal? Or of wings if you can never fly far or swift enough, or mount to any final resting-place? Or of a heart if you can never love your friend with a perfect love? Or of a soul if you can never be anything like as strong and brave as your soul keeps urging you to be? Is not life on these tragic terms a futile, irrational business? Were it not wiser to starve your soul to death and be done with it all; to stand still in your tracks, steadfastly refusing to mount upon impotent wings; not to love at all, since you must always fall infinitely short of the devotion your love prompts you to?

Higher than the beasts indeed! It

was a sorry day for humanity, these puling pessimists tell us, when nature begot us on this earth, a race of restless creatures with all manner of impossible hopes and resistless impulses stirring in our souls. It were better for us to sink back once more to the level of these same contented beasts of the field. They graze a little by day, sleep soundly by night and all is well with them. They go round and round in a circle, you say. Yes, but their life is a contented round at that, an easy round of satisfaction after satisfaction.

IV.

But consider for once the glory of it! The pessimists are accurate enough in their account of the facts. As human, we have set out on a journey which has no stopping place. No doubt of that. But the glory of it is that, once we have been touched by this longing for the unattainable, we would not return to the contented level of the beasts—not if we could.

We wouldn't, now, would we? Our readers can answer this question, each for himself, if he will. Why not make this a matter for our "quarter-hour communion." Some day during your quarter-hour with the Highest you can find, just ask yourself on what lines you want to move through life—whether in a circle like a dumb beast, or as an asymptote like a human being. Some day—only let it not be a day when you are tired and discouraged, but a day when you are *able*, feeling the zest of life coursing through your veins; for it is only then that you are fit to pass a fair judgment upon life—some day, I say, when you are glad and confident in spirit, go right up to Life and tell It exactly what you require of It. If you had your wish, what kind of life would you order for yourself?

Would you ask Life to let you run just one race to its goal and let you stop there forever? No; that isn't human nature. Once you have rested a bit and caught your breath, you are up to another race; and then to another. The glory of it is not in the goal but in the race itself.

Would you ask Life to let you fly away up to a resting place among the high branches, a resting place hidden away among the thick leaves, and leave you there to brood forever over your one great flight? Not if I know human nature! You would ask Life to let you nest overnight; but with the dawning of a new day, I can see you spreading your wings for another and still loftier flight. And then another, and another.

Would you ask Life to put just one great song in your heart, one great message on your soul, and, once you have poured that out upon the ears of men, strike you dumb forever after, leaving you to meditate in the silences of your own heart and soul? Not if you are human! Being human, you want one message to follow upon another, one song upon another, in a never-ending, all-glorious reaching out toward the final, unattainable harmony.

Or love—would you ask Life for love, but only for just enough to embrace a few of your kind, to content you with the few who are near to you, and leave you there in your narrow circle, quite untouched by the miseries, unmoved by the wretchedness of the millions who live outside that circumscribed life? No. No one wants to live and love in a circle. You would ask Life to put into your soul a love as deep and as broad as the human race, embracing all your kind from the nearest to the farthest, from the least to the greatest. The glory of it is that you want to be one with the human race in its tragic, if indeed it can be called tragic, struggle toward the Impossible.

V.

If you want to live like a human being, don't be a circle all closed in and completed. *Be an asymptote!* by all means, an asymptote. The curve of your life drawing ever closer and closer to the eternal but, as you value your life! never quite touching any eternal base. If you would live like a human being, don't be an angel forever poised in mid-air. Be a lark rather. Sing your way upward. Return to earth, as you must, for a resting spell; but then up again, winging your way higher and yet higher. The joy of life is not in the brooding upon the nest. It is in the flight itself to higher and higher altitudes.

Program of the General Conference

The following program of the General Unitarian Conference, to be held in Montreal September 25–28, 1917, is arousing a great deal of interest in the religious as well as the secular press. In point of priority, the Unitarian Church has an advantage; it is the first in general convention to signalize the anniversary of one hundred years of peace between Great Britain and the United States. In Montreal, Professor Colby, of McGill University, will give an address sketching the history of peaceful relations between the United States and Canada, while addresses will follow from ex-President William H. Taft and Premier Sir Robert Borden of Ottawa.

This is likely to be the first of many church conventions held by the people of the United States with their Canadian brethren. The Montreal Unitarian parish of the Church of the Messiah has made elaborate plans to receive the Conference. Reservations should be made at Hotel Windsor, the Conference headquarters, as early as possible.

W. F. Greenman,
Secretary.

GENERAL CONFERENCE.

September 25–28, 1917.

Tuesday Evening, September 25, 8.15 p. m.

Devotional Service prepared for the occasion by Rev. Frederick R. Griffin of Montreal, Canada. Conducted by Mr. Griffin and Rev. Sydney B. Snow, Boston, Mass.

Sermon by Rev. Stanley A. Mellor, B.A., Ph.D., of Liverpool, England.

Wednesday Morning, September 26, 9.00 a. m., at Windsor Hall.

9.00 Morning Prayers, conducted by Rev. Minot Simons of Cleveland, Ohio.

9.30–9.35 Invocation.

9.35–10.05 Address by ex-President William H. Taft, LL.D., New Haven, Conn.

10.05–10.15 Business.

10.15–10.40 Report of the Council by Rev. John Haynes Holmes, New York.

10.40–11.25 Theological Paper by Rev. William L. Sullivan, New York. Discussion opened by Prof. Harry A. Overstreet, New York.

Business—Introduction of Resolutions.

Adjournment.

Wednesday Noon, 1:30 p. m.

Ministers' Luncheon.

Laymen's Luncheon at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel.

Alliance Luncheon at Hotel Windsor. President Miss Lucy Lowell of Boston, Mass., will preside.

Speakers—Miss Helen R. Y. Reid, L.G.J.J., Convener of Ladies Auxiliary Canadian Patriotic Fund of Montreal; Miss Bancroft of Hopedale, Mass., Miss Martha Stimson, Parish Assistant, Church of the Messiah, Montreal, for "Parish Workers."

Wednesday Afternoon, 5 p. m., at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel.

Reception to the General Conference by Church of the Messiah.

Wednesday Evening, 8.15 p. m., at Windsor Hall.

Scripture and Prayer, Rev. U. G. B. Pierce, D.D., of Washington, D. C.

International Peace Program.

Addresses: Historical, Professor Chas. W. Colby, Ph.D., of McGill University, Montreal; In Behalf of the United States, by ex-Pres. Wm. H. Taft, LL.D., New Haven, Conn.; In Behalf of the Dominion of Canada, Premier Sir Robert Borden of Ottawa.

Thursday Morning, 9.00 a. m., in the Church of the Messiah.

9.00 Morning Prayers. The Church of the Messiah invites the Conference to a Communion Service conducted by Rev. Howard N. Brown of Boston.

9.45 Invocation.

9.50 Religious Education Program.

Addresses: Prof. Durant Drake, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N. Y.; Rev. Florence Buck, Boston, Mass.

11.00–12.30 Business.

Thursday Afternoon.

Excursion to Lachine Rapids.

Thursday Evening, 8.15 p. m., at Windsor Hall.

Scripture and Prayer by Rev. Eugene R. Shippen, Detroit, Mich.

Applied Christianity:

1. "Industrial Relations," by John A. Fitch, "Survey" Staff.

2. "Abolition of Poverty," by Mr. Frederick Almy, Buffalo, N. Y., President National Conference of Charities and Corrections.

3. "The Reorganization of Medical Practice," by Prof. Anna Garlin Spencer, Meadville, Pa.

4. "Problem of Correction," by Thomas M. Osborne of New York.

Friday Morning, 9.00–11.30 a. m., at Church of the Messiah.

9.00–9.20 Devotional Service by Rev. James C. Hodgins of Toronto, Canada.

CANADIAN DAY, Mr. J. S. N. Dougall, President of Canadian Unitarian Association, presiding.

9.30–9.35 Invocation.

Addresses:

9.35–9.50 1. "The Liberal Icelandic Movement," by Rev. Rognvaldur Petursson of Winnipeg, Field Secretary of Icelandic Missions.

9.50–10.15 2. "The Unitarian Missionary Opportunity of Canada", by Rev. Horace Westwood, D.D., of Winnipeg, Secretary of the Canadian Unitarian Association.

10.15–10.30 3. "The Progress of Pro-

hibition in Canada," by Rev. William Irvine of Calgary.

10.30–10.50 4. "Vocational Training for the Returned Soldier," by Dr. F. H. Sexton of Military Hospitals Commission of Nova Scotia.

10.50–11.10 5. "Unitarianism and the New Democracy," by Prof. William Alexander of Edmonton.

Final Business, 11.10–1.00.

Adjournment.

Friday Noon, 1.00 p. m.

Luncheon—Guild of Parish Workers.

Friday Afternoon, 5.00–6.00 p. m.

Dedication of Commemorative Tablet in Church of the Messiah.

Devotional Service by Rev. J. H. Lathrop, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Address by Rev. Samuel A. Eliot, D.D., Boston, Mass.

Address by Dr. Milton L. Hersey of Montreal.

Friday Evening, 8.00 or 8.15 p. m., at Windsor Hall.

The Unitarian Proclamation.

Scripture and Prayer by Rev. Edward F. Hayward of Chicopee, Mass.

Addresses: Rev. C. S. S. Dutton of San Francisco, Cal.; Rev. E. H. Reeman, Trenton, N. J.; Rev. S. M. Crothers, D.D., of Cambridge, Mass.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Headquarters will be maintained at Hotel Windsor, which for many years has well earned its reputation as a hotel of the first rank. This will be the first time since the Saratoga days of fond memory that the Conference could, under one roof, find shelter for all its visiting delegates. Hotel Windsor is near all railway stations and less than half a mile from the Church of the Messiah. All the most largely attended sessions of the Conference will be held in Windsor Hall, a part of the Hotel.

Prices for rooms range from $2.00 per day up. The Hotel is built about a city block, so that there are no rooms in a well. On application to Hotel Windsor, Montreal, details may be had and reservations should be made as early as possible.

Other hotels are within easy walking distance of the various places of meeting.

MIDDLE STATES CONFERENCE LETTER

A certain pious chronicler of old Ravenna prefaced an account of its bishops with the illuminating statement that, in cases where the facts were unknown to him, he had drawn freely on his fancy. And thanks to this naive confession—in advance—he has somewhat disarmed criticism. Not even a stout partisan of the "dry as dust" school could quite hurl at his shade such epithets as Kingsley bestowed on the author of "Lead, Kindly Light,"—also sponsor for sundry "Lives of the Saints." Nonetheless, the practice referred to is not generally commended nowadays.

Should I follow said pious chronicler's example—ah, what though we are wallowing in the ecclesiastical doldrums, and, too, I might defend myself by observing that Journalism, even Religious Journalism, yea, even Liberal Religious Journalism, still at times exhales the perfume of the Arabian Nights—yet, for all that, who would forgive me, least of all what reader of the ADVANCE, should I begin:

Newark, N. J.—Here, as in the neighboring city of Elizabeth, our Unitarian Church has been open all summer, with vast audiences following from Sunday to Sunday a series of popular addresses on "Gnosticism," "Neo-Platonism," and "The Philosophy of Catherine Bora"?

Fortunately, though, "our Unitarian Church" at Newark has not been open this summer, nor indeed started as yet (is not one Universalist society really too few for a village of 350,000?), and though Elizabeth *like some others* has but repeated the old hymn:

"Calm me, my God, and keep me calm
While these hot breezes blow,"

—fortunately, I repeat, a few of our churches have been open—Paterson, for example, where Dr. Singsen, of Hackensack, has presided; and Germantown, whose summer preacher has been Rev. Wm. Parry, of the Girard Avenue (Philadelphia) church. While over on Manhattan, at the Messiah—oh, they have not again reached the mark set on April 22, when 1,098 crossed the thresholds, nor even that of May 6, with its 875; but with Drs. Brown and Holmes preaching alternate months—let the figures speak for the quality of the sermons on "Making America Safe for Democracy" and "Spiritual Preparedness," and again, "Is Jesus Man's Ideal?" They ran June 17, 183; 24, 117; July 1, 103; 8, 100, and so on, altogether goodly audiences for summer holidays when "no one" is supposed to be in town, and when Brooklyn has services of its own at the Church of Our Savior. The preachers there—behold the list: In July, Messrs. G. C. Cressey and C. H. Lyttle, of New York; F. R. Griffin, of Montreal; Gilmour, of Dallas, and Manchester, of Salem; in August, Messrs. Reeman, of Trenton; Forbes, of Dorchester; Shelander, of Passaic, and Kent, of New Orleans, with Dean Wilbur, of Berkeley, September 2. Is it a wonder that the pastor, Mr. Lathrop, writes, "There has been a fairly good attendance at these services so far, in spite of heat and storms"?

Furthermore, at Brooklyn, Mr. Lathrop has traveled his daily rounds all summer as Chairman of the Navy Yard Commission, etc., thus fraternizing with two other resident Unitarian ministers, Rev. John N. Mark, of East Lexington, and Rev. Thomas M. Mark, of Marblehead, Mass., the first chaplain at the Navy Yard, the second at the Naval Reserve station. And at Brooklyn again the Columbia House of Willow

Pace Chapel has, as usual, refused to pull down the curtains—save at night—Miss Katherine Vesey being in charge during Mr. Howlett's August vacation. Indeed, a "notable community celebration" was held under its leadership the Fourth of July, when the street, closed to traffic, echoed the scud of supple feet and the soft persuasions of the band. At the Chapel, moreover, they are installing new windows, to be dedicated in the fall. Are they sewing there, too, as elsewhere? Probably. Certainly at several of our churches the whirr of machines has been heard these months, while fingers, skillful and unskillful, have stitched together not clothing for the heathen, who need none, but garments and bandages for those wounded in the battle for Democracy. Yes, and still—well, some day there will be more of them abroad, more of resolute "conscientious objectors" to the rape of Belgium and the drowning of women and children on the high seas. Poor fellows—but nay—not so poor after all, these boys in khaki outward bound. Not so poor, my pacifist reader, though they—some of them—never return to

"Go down the long, long trail with you,"

still re-echoes Lowell's confession:

"We rather seem the dead who stayed behind."

"*Tell father,*" wrote one of our Montclair boys, Paul Osborne, shortly before his death in France last June, "*Tell father again I can never thank him enough for letting me go.*"

* * *

After that 'tis hard to come back to church activities. But then, barring those already mentioned, there are none to speak of just now—at least activities audible in my vicinity. Indeed, so intense the silence, impenetrable, oppressive, that, recalling my comrades in the Conference, I am left like the companions of Aeneas,

"*Spemque me tumque inter dubii, seu vivere credant*
Sive extrema pati nec iam exaudire vocatos,"

although Dr. Pease, I know, leaves Ithaca soon for Fitchburg. Yet, "How still is thought," wrote Carlyle—and several others. Presumably amid the silence great plans are being laid for the fall, when the breezes, caught on the mountains and the shore and in the garden, will be turned again loose in our reopened churches—churches previously aired and swept, let us hope, by God-fearing janitors. And programs are being completed as (pardon me) at Elizabeth, where Alliance and Men's Club have now the year's dates almost filled, and the "Tuesday-Night Club" has arranged its course for the autumn. "Phases of the Modern Democratic Movement" is to be the general topic of the latter, with papers on Rousseau and Shelley, on Marx and Whitman, on the struggle between Liberalism and Catholicism, and on the aims of the Feminist and of the "I. W. W."

Then, too, a Sunday school pageant has been booked for October, one based in part on material furnished by our helpful "Department of Religious Education," and presenting Luther at Wittenberg and Worms, and in the castle on the Wartberg, where he threw that real inkstand at an imaginary Devil—or was it the reverse? Nor is this all. Here also, and more important, we are waiting his advent. Whose? Why that of the new Field-Agent for the Middle States Conference, of course. Rev. Frank Gilmore, long minister at Madison, Wisconsin. For him and his a cordial welcome. Will he sleep at Elizabeth? His waking eye will behold the wide "vineyard of the Lord," from Flushing to the Niagara River, with its acknowledged difficulties and its undeveloped possibilities. *Amen and Amen.* And for a glimpse of his staunch coadjutors we will invite him to our North Jersey laymen's banquet (?), dinner (?), supper (?), lunch (?)—'tis as Hoover and the Committee decide—at Montclair next October. Then and there he and we will gain fresh inspiration for our work.

The more so—need I add—as that church at Montclair is a sort of model church, active in every good work (or almost every), alive, progressive, with a taste for pioneering—as witness the "Open Forum" which it started nine years ago, and which has proved so successful that the pastor's comments thereon will be of general interest. "Our method," writes Mr. Wiers, "is to have an expert, the best procurable, deal with some question of particular timeliness, usually social or economic, though sometimes literary or artistic or scientific, or very occasionally religious. We had nothing but the address until two or three years ago, when we added questions. We have never seen our way clear to permit general discussion. I think it well to do that in a city forum, but a blase suburban audience gets bored to extinction immediately. Our question period has become practically as important as the address, and rather more interesting. We were here till 11.15 one night the past winter, asking questions. The value of Unity Forum has been that it has forced Montclair, a community of people who have arrived, and who believe the present order of society to be practically flawless, to see that much of our present system has feet of clay. I think we have had a distinctly leavening influence on the conservative cast of the community. Our Forum is now organized apart from the church, and may ultimately no longer meet here, as the Board has now about as many outside of Unity as inside. It cuts into the morning attendance somewhat, but, on the other hand, it gets people coming to church who never would think of coming otherwise, while it has brought into our membership several very strong families."

So much for forums. And with this—but stay. Did I speak in my last letter of a projected excursus on "Middle States Theology?" 'Twas suggested by the comment quoted, "that all our North Jersey ministers believed in a growing God," a statement which, though later modified to apply to only some thirty-seven per cent

still roused my curiosity and led me to send out to a number, as a test question, "*What do you think of Mr. Britling's Theology?*" Unfortunately, 'twas vacation time, while "Thought," as Carlyle, and several others, said, you recall, "is very still." However, in one case at least it found voice. Mr. Backus, of Erie, answered, and let me give it almost in full:

"Well, when I laid down the book ('Mr. Britling Sees it Through'), there was a true Methodist Amen in my heart. The finite, evolving God is the God of my own experience, and for the four short years of my ministry I have been trying to tell my people of Him in such a way that they may find in Him the inspiration and strength and comfort that He has been to me. The conception of a God who is the Spirit actually at work in the world, toiling to win for it life more abundant, is the only one that can afford my reason a satisfactory explanation of the problem of evil, and likewise is the inevitable outcome of the evolutionary view of life. And in addition to satisfying the demands of the intellect, the belief in the finite, struggling God furnishes those religious incentives which to me were lacking as long as I tried to make my thought conform to the traditional absolutism. Experiencing God as the Spirit of Life, struggling to obtain fuller expression, gives me an abiding sense of my own responsibility for the success of this venture in Divinity. I know that if God does not conquer within me, so far is the divine life defeated. I know that my victory makes so much surer his triumph. And with this sense of responsibility comes in large measure the strength to meet it.

"Naturally, then," he continues, "I rejoiced greatly when I learned that the God of my own heart had revealed Himself to a grief stricken man across the water;" but adds, "After reading 'God the Invisible King,' I see there is not full agreement in our experience. Its separation of God the Creator from the evolving God, whom Mr. Wells calls 'God the Redeemer,' I find objectionable. Our human life to me is not something that is alien or antagonistic to the universe, but rather a wholesome and natural child." With which affirmation many will agree. We may not all be able to subscribe to the further statement, "God the Redeemer is but God the Creator become conscious of Himself." Nor are some of us able to subscribe to any hard and fast statement *even though we wrote it with our own hands.* Suggestive the words of Guyau, "None of the divinities created by the human spirit can satisfy it today: it needs them all at once and something yet beyond." Yet dim or clear our theological vision, now when the boys are outward bound, many of us, "absolutists" and "humanists" and "mystics," would emphatically re-echo Royce's summons:

"Arise, Son of Man, enter into thy labors. Is it God's world? It is also thine."

Perhaps that is the real "Middle States Theology" after all.

Yours for Montreal,

K. E. Evans.

WESTERN CONFERENCE NEWS

During the summer most of our churches have been closed, but since several are without pastors there has been considerable activity in the way of arrangements for candidating campaigns in the fall. Several ministers of other denominations have been applying for fellowship with us, and this has entailed considerable correspondence.

In the absence of the ministers, the people of our congregations have been adjusting themselves spiritually and materially to the fact that our country is at war. Many of the young men from our churches have entered the officers' training camps, enlisted in the militia, or been drawn in the draft. From some of our churches nearly every young man has gone forth to serve the country in some capacity. Older men are serving on exemption boards, and one with the aviation commission. The women have been busy with Red Cross work and, where camps are near at hand, in extending a gracious hospitality. As elsewhere, unanimity of opinion has not been achieved in our churches, but for the most part there is a unity of spirit expressed in a desire to serve in one way or in another.

Ohio.

In Ohio our churches are all so fortunate as to retain the ministers who were in charge last year. The Cincinnati church boasts a new organization of women, known as the "Tuesday Club." Its aims are as follows: "To promote fellowship and social intercourse among the widely scattered women of the church, to increase a denominational feeling, to keep in touch with and to help other Unitarian societies, to encourage forward-looking tendencies in the denomination, to be of assistance to the minister and officers of the church, and to be available for some relief work, either for the denomination, city, or for a national emergency." This church in its calendar maintains a roll of honor on which are listed the names of the young men who have entered the national service in the present crisis. The *Church News Bulletin*, issued near the end of June, gives a list of books for summer reading. On June 30 Dr. Thayer preached a sermon on "The New Declaration of Independence." The last Sunday before the vacation, on July 8, Mr. Robinson preached on "Where Security Is to be Found."

The Toledo church will be the host of the Michigan Conference at its annual meeting on October 23-25. Though in Ohio this church is geographically such a near neighbor to our Michigan churches that for some years it has united with them in annual meetings.

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MICHIGAN.

As usual, the church at Ann Arbor maintained services through July and part of August on account of the summer school session at the University. Sermon subjects have been: "Satan—His Rise and Fall;" "Wells' *New War Religion*;" "Sociology and Religion;" "Religious Ideas in the Poetry of Whittier;" "Religious Ideas in the Poetry of Emerson." The pastor, Mr. Loring, was in charge during this period. On one Sunday in August Rev. C. M. Perry of Iowa City filled the pulpit, and on August 11 Dr. Sunderland, a former pastor of the church, preached on "The Message of Tagore." The attendance was larger than usual, though the number of students at the University was considerably less than in recent years.

The People's Church at Kalamazoo has extended a call to Mr. William Yerington, who has accepted the call and will begin his work the first Sunday in September. Mr. Yerington is not yet ordained and was recently given the fellowship by the Western Committee.

Rev. Klaas Oosterhuis has resigned the pastorate of the Holland church at Grand Rapids after a year's service. It is not quite clear how regular services can be maintained at this point during the coming year, but the Sunday school will be kept up and at least occasional services held.

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ILLINOIS.

In Chicago the First Church, which is close by the University, was kept open as usual during the month of July. Dr. Mann of the Third Church has been doing some work at the University during the summer. Mr. Hawley of Unity Church, as usual, has been spending the summer with his family in Michigan. The summer residence of a section of the Meadville Theological School in Chicago is no longer a novelty, but a well-established fact. Fifteen Meadville students have been in attendance during this summer, Prof. Christie being the faculty representative in charge. On August 13 a Unitarian dinner, planned and managed by the students, was held at the Gladstone Hotel. About forty sat down to table. Prof. Christie spoke at some length of the significance and promise of "Meadville in Chicago," and was followed by Mr. Smith, Secretary of the Western Conference, and Prof. Foster, who spoke for the University. Mr. Harry A. Weston, a lifelong Unitarian and a graduate of the Harvard Divinity School, spoke briefly. The occasion had nothing of the monastic about it, since each student brought a lady and there were women representatives of our churches at Lincoln and Omaha who were doing work at the University during the summer.

With five thousand men at the Officers' Training Camp at Fort Sheridan, with a recruiting week and persistent enlistment campaigns, with naval and hospital camps in Grant Park, just opposite the Loop district, Chicago had constantly thrust upon its consciousness the fact of the war. One striking feature of the recruiting campaign was the presence of a detachment of Canadian Highlanders with their "Kiltie" band. About fifty men represented all who were left effective of a regiment of fifteen hundred after service on the battle lines in France.

The Geneseo church received a bequest of $10,000 from the late Mrs. M. J. Miller, and another bequest of $4,000 from Miss Cornelia Allen of Scituate, Mass., a sister of Mrs. Miller. The local church was not the only recipient of Mrs. Miller's bounty, since she also liberally endowed a fund for working women in need, and made other bequests to religious and charitable organizations in which she had maintained a lively interest for many years.

The State Conference will be held at Sheffield on October 16 and 17. The program has again been planned by the President of the Conference, Mr. J. E. Williams. The program last year was concerned with the meaning and value of religion as subjectively expressed. This year it will deal with the objective phenomena which induce religious reactions and will specially consider the influence of the world war on the conception of God and religion. The effect of the world war upon religion and its effect upon the churches will be considered; likewise the effect of war literature such as *Mr. Britling Sees It Through* and Romaine Roland's *Above the Battle.* The question of a possible criterion for determining right and wrong in international relations, and the question whether religion is solely concerned with the individual soul or also with social and life, will be among the topics. The significance of Wells' *God the Invisible King* will be considered. The closing session will consider: "How can we maintain our faith in the beneficence of the world order in the presence of this world tragedy?" and "May we hope for the triumph of a form of religion that will transcend all sect boundaries and appeal to the hearts of all sincere religious souls?"

At Urbana services were continued through July for the benefit of those attending the summer school. Mr. Vail's topics were as follows: "How Browning and Emerson Prove Immortality;" "Two of the Greatest Masterpieces in Modern Literature upon the Art of Living—*The Seven Valleys* and the *Hidden Words*;" "The Spiritual Dramas of Rabindranath Tagore;" "The Genius of Tolstoy—His Answer to the Question: What is Christianity?"

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WISCONSIN.

The church at Menomonie, which has been without a minister for the past year, has secured Rev. Walter A. Smith, late of St. Cloud, Minn., as pastor for the coming year, and is looking forward with courage and confidence to renewed activity.

Rev. Frank A. Gilmore, for seventeen years pastor of the church at Madison, Wis., has accepted the position of Secretary of the Middle States Conference. On July 26, when Mr. and Mrs. Gilmore returned from an automobile ride, they found the parsonage surrounded by motor cars, large and small, some seventy parishioners having come to speed the parting guests with expressions of affection and good will. On July 28 Dr. Samuel A. Eliot, President of the American Unitarian Association, was a guest of the Gilmore's, and on that evening there was another gathering at the parsonage.

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MINNESOTA.

The church at St. Cloud was not left long without a minister when Rev. W. A. Smith accepted the call to Menomonie. Before the summer was over a call had been issued to Mr. Vincent B. Silliman of the Meadville Theological School. Mr. Silliman will begin his work early in September.

The minister elect of the St. Paul Church, Rev. Frederick M. Eliot, is chaplain of Base Hospital No. 7, and has been given indefinite leave of absence by his church. Mr. Eliot is still in New England and has made arrangements for the supply of the St. Paul pulpit for the first four months after the opening in the fall. Prof. F. G. Peabody, D. D., Rev. S. M. Crothers, D. D., and Rev. Christopher Eliot, father of the pastor, will serve in turn.

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IOWA.

The churches at Davenport and Keokuk are without pastors, but the Davenport church has already taken vigorous action looking towards the securing of a new leader.

At Iowa City services were maintained through the month of July. The pastor, Dr. Perry, preached on the following topics: "German Idealism and the War;" "American Idealism and the War;" "The Spiritual Sinews of War;" "America's International Mission;" "America's National Destiny."

At Des Moines Mr. Reese preached on the last Sunday before vacation upon "World Democracy." The Housing Survey, which was set on foot as a result of the initiative of Mr. Reese, was completed just before the vacation. The pastor spent the summer "Way down in Kentucky." One of the concentration camps will be located at Des Moines, and the church will do all that it can to secure proper conditions and to extend cordial fellowship to the men in training.

At Sioux City a beloved former pastor, Rev. Eleanor Gordon, filled the pulpit most happily during the last four Sundays before the suspension of services for the summer. During July the activities took another direction. The church and parsonage were painted and put in complete repair. The improved condition of the property is due in no small measure to the work of the efficient House Chairman, Mr. Ray Sager. Contrary to custom, services were resumed on August 5 under the new minister, Rev. Charles E. Snyder. A series of four sermons on questions of interest to thoughtful people was announced: "The Strength and Weakness of Spiritualism;" "The Strength and Weakness of Christian Science;" "The Strength and Weakness of Roman Catholicism;" "The Strength and Weakness of Liberal Orthodoxy." Discriminating appreciation marked Mr. Snyder's handling of these subjects and compelled confidence in his conclusions. The response in attendance and interest fully justified the experiment of the August session. It was a month of profit. A new roster is under way, and Mr. Snyder is rapidly getting into touch with his people. September 1 will find Unity Church with its year's work well under way.

The annual meeting of the State Association will be held at Griswold, October 2, 3, and 4. The general topic will be, "The Challenge of the Liberal Church." This will be the first opportunity for the members of this community church to meet a group of Unitarians, and will emphasize the fellowship which may exist without actual affiliation.

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MISSOURI.

At St. Louis the erection of the new home for Unity Church goes on apace.

At Kansas City the church has been saddened by the resignation of Rev. Paul Dansingberg. An affection of the throat, which has now extended over several

months, makes it so uncertain when he can take up public duties again that he felt it wise to lay down his work at Kansas City. A letter from the Secretary states that the church was never more united than at the present time, and that they are anxious to secure an adequate leader as promptly as possible.

KANSAS.

The church at Lawrence, which has been without a pastor since the resignation of Mr. Backus last January, has extended a call to Rev. Charles E. Luck, pastor of the Congregational Church at McPherson, Kan. It may be of interest that Mr. Luck was the pastor and creator of the community church at Griswold, Iowa, and that for some years he has been ready to take service in our fellowship. A clipping from the McPherson paper bears witness to the exceptional success of his ministry at that point, and also to his liberalism in religion. The Lawrence church is to be congratulated upon securing him as its leader.

FELLOWSHIP NOTICES.

Rev. W. A. Marzolf, having satisfied the Committee on Fellowship of the New England States, is hereby commended to our ministers and churches. Certificate granted, July 19, 1917. Charles T. Billings, Julian C. Jaynes, Harry Lutz.

Rev. Samuel G. Dunham, having satisfied the Committee on Fellowship of the New England States, is hereby commended to our ministers and churches. Certificate granted, July 19, 1917. Charles T. Billings, Julian C. Jaynes, Harry Lutz.

Mr. William Yerington is hereby commended to the ministers and churches of the Unitarian fellowship, for a probationary period of six months, ending January 1, 1918. Frank S. C. Wicks, Frank A. Gilmore, E. C. Smith, Western Committee.

Rev. Charles E. Luck, formerly of the Congregational ministry, is hereby commended to the ministers and churches of the Unitarian Fellowship for a probationary period of six months, ending February 15, 1918. Frank S. C. Wicks, Frank A. Gilmore, Ernest C. Smith, Western Committee.

The Committee for the Western States has received from Rev. James Henry Fuller of the Christian denomination an application for the certificate of commendation issued by the committee. Frank S. C. Wicks, Frank A. Gilmore, Ernest C. Smith.

TUITION.

I must have had a dream of God
  Within my mind,
When as a newt I pushed the clod,
  Though I was blind.

I must have known the poignant bliss
  Of some far goal,
When I was but a chrysalis
  Without a soul.

I must have been a universe
  On fiery wings—
The antecedent of my verse
  Which lives and sings.

—[HARRIET LAKE-BURCH.

RESOLUTIONS FOR THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

The following resolutions will be presented to the General Conference of Unitarian and other Christian Churches at Montreal, September 25-28, 1917:

"Resolved, That in the Rules of the Unitarian Fellowship Committee, Rule 6 under 'Executive Committee,' be amended by changing the word 'or' to 'and' in line eight, so the clause will read, 'and who are accredited under these rules.' "

The purpose of this change is to do away with an ambiguity. At the meeting of the General Conference at San Francisco the wording of one section of the rules as offered by the committee was changed by substituting the word "and" for the word "or." This was done after full discussion. The fact that the change also should have been made in another section was overlooked at that time. The passage of this resolution will make the two sections carry the same meaning.

"Resolved, That the Conference instruct the Fellowship Committee urgently to recommend to applicants for commendation to our churches a course of reading which shall acquaint the applicants with the origin, development and aims of the liberal faith.

"Resolved, That the President of the Conference appoint a commission of seven members which shall include the Executive Committee of the Fellowship Committee to determine such a course of reading."

The adoption of these resolutions will be moved by the Executive Committee of the Fellowship Committee.

ERNEST C. SMITH,
For the Executive Committee.

If your faith in God is stronger for every humble task in which you need and get His aid, then that humble task is necessary to the fullness of your faith in God. It will make the music of your life more firm and solid.—[Phillips Brooks.

TWO WORTH-WHILE BOOKS.

American Unitarian Association, Publication Department.
BOSTON, MASS., July 26, 1917.

REV. ERNEST C. SMITH,
Chicago, Ill.

MY DEAR MR. SMITH:

Two sterling books of invaluable worth to all Christian thinkers have just been issued by the Reverend Paul Revere Frothingham of the Arlington Street Church of Boston.

We Believe is a compilation of stirring sermons on the five cardinal principles of our belief, the sermons being brought forth by the recent religious revival in Boston. Unitarians should not miss the opportunity of obtaining these remarkable messages which extend to us the confident promise that the doctrine of the brotherhood of man, though staggering under the horrors of the present war, will eventually prove the white beacon light that will lead the world to lasting peace. Every page rings with hope, with comfort, and with truth. This book, printed and bound in pocket-size edition, is published by the Beacon Press of the American Unitarian Association, and sells for ninety-eight cents postpaid.

A Confusion of Tongues, recently published by Messrs. Houghton Mifflin Company, will prove most helpful and comforting to all earnest Christians in this chaotic state of civilization. It is made up of ten essay-sermons dealing with the problems of the spirit in the light of the present world catastrophe. Dr. Frothingham again assures us that "what is excellent is permanent," and points out to those who would see the things which are excellent—the "Unshaken Things." In short, *A Confusion of Tongues* will help to bring order out of the chaos in the minds of those who have been thrown into spiritual confusion by the events of the Great War. This book attractively bound sells for $1.50 postpaid.

We believe you will find both these books well worth adding to your library, and shall be glad to send them to you postpaid. For your convenience we attach an order form.

Very truly yours,
W. FORHA ROBERTSON.

25 Beacon St.

ORDER FORM.

Please send me a copy of *We Believe* (postpaid).

Please send me a copy of *A Confusion of Tongues* (postpaid), for which I enclose (money order for $..... or check for $.....).

Name .....

Address .....

THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION INSTITUTE AT MEADVILLE.

The ninth annual Institute for Religious Education was held at the Theological School at Meadville, Pa., from July 5 to 25, inclusive. As was anticipated, in view of war conditions, the attendance was somewhat less than in previous years, a total of forty-five as against sixty the year previous. This reduction in numbers was largely compensated for, however, by the fact that, without exception, those present were actual workers in the Sunday schools of their churches, and were there for the purpose of getting help in that work. The spirit of the assembly was, therefore, very earnest, so that the Institute will rank as one of the best ever held in Meadville.

Three members of the faculty of the Theological School were on the staff of lecturers. President Franklin C. Southworth and Professor Anna Garlin Spencer took one of the three morning periods on alternate days, speaking, respectively, on parish problems and on organization for the promotion of ethical interests. Professor Clayton R. Bowen gave illuminating lectures, daily, on the development of the New Testament.

Dr. William Byron Forbush, widely known as a leader in young people's movements, gave a valuable course on graphic methods in teaching, speaking also four times in the evening to large audiences on problems in the lives of growing boys and girls. Rev. William I. Lawrance acted as Director of the Institute, lecturing and holding conferences on the organization and conduct of the church school. Evening lectures were given by Rev. Charles E. Snyder of Allegheny, Rev. A. R. Shelander of Passaic, and Professor Bowen. Mrs. A. R. Shelander gave, on one evening, a powerful interpretation of Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, and from the talent discovered among those in attendance several attractive musical and dramatic programs were provided.

These Meadville Institutes are held through the cooperation of the Theological School and the Department of Religious Education of the American Unitarian Association. The school furnishes the buildings, library, catalogues, and two members of the faculty, the Department of Religious Education providing the rest.

"Virtue is vastly harder to detect or depict than vice or crime."

"From his day to ours Jesus has appealed to the literary imagination as no one else has ever begun to do."—[Extracts from *Jesus, The Christ, in the Light of Psychology*, by Dr. G. Stanley Hall.

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